

The second Chinese Waldorf Early Childhood conference: Children of the E- generation and Waldorf Early Childhood Education

Kathy MacFarlane



The conference was held at the end of October in Dezhou, with around 500 participants, at a wonderful solar hotel complex in Shandong province where Confucius was born. The main theme represents a hot topic, (in contrast to the weather), looking at the relevance of Waldorf Education in a rapidly changing world.

We looked at the modern child, the physical effects that technology has on human development and the specific situation of super-fast electronic developments in China. We then looked at the redeeming power of art and culture in Waldorf education and the task of the teacher to meet these children of the E- generation. Some of the lecturers have offered full presentations of their talks and these will be available on the IASWECE website.



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For me, one of the most moving features of the conference was the letter the service staff wrote to the organisers at the end of the conference, commenting on the friendly, caring and considerate behavior of the participants, saying we were truly role models in education!

After the 6-day conference, 30 Chinese and international tutors met to review the Early Childhood Teacher Education programme that has been organized by Thanh Cherry over the past 12 years in China, and to offer their support and suggestions on into the future.

Once again this conference has confirmed my belief that working within different cultures offers a unique opportunity to extend and deepen the impulse behind Waldorf Education.

Kathy MacFarlane is a former Waldorf kindergarten teacher from New Zealand. For many years she has been responsible for the Early Childhood training in New Zealand. Currently she is active in coordinating the WECC program, the Waldorf Early Childhood training in China.

